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DEPT FOR EUR/NCE AARON JENSEN

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [RO](#)

SUBJECT: BASESCU TO PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS: CREATE A NEW  
GOVERNING COALITION OR HOLD EARLY ELECTIONS

Classified By: Polcouns Theodore Tanoue for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary: President Traian Basescu in a letter to parliamentary leaders has suggested two options to resolve the current political impasse: have the current (or reshuffled) government submit to a vote of confidence or create a new coalition based on a new parliamentary majority. Basescu concludes that if no stable parliamentary majority emerges, then the only remaining option is early elections. Basescu also warns that any alternative to a "transparent" political solution would be an attempt to rob the Romanian people of their liberty to express their electoral preferences. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) President Train Basescu on 3/21 sent an open letter to mainstream political parties with his views on how to end the current political turmoil. The letter makes note of the extended consultation session that he held with mainstream party leaders (e.g., all the parliamentary parties with the exception of the right-extremist PRM) the previous day, and stresses that recent political developments underscore that there is now a "volatile majority" in parliament which changes from day to day depending on the issue. Basescu also observes that the PD-PNL relationship has deteriorated to a point where a solution originating from the current governing coalition is now highly unlikely. Finally, the President notes that the previous day's consultations disclosed that all of the mainstream political parties share "a legitimate wish" to overcome the current political deadlock, which has led to instability and affected the governance of state institutions.

¶3. (SBU) Basescu in his open letter proposes two options going forward. The first would be to have the current (or reshuffled) government submit itself "urgently" to a vote of confidence in order to "delineate the borders" of a new parliamentary majority. Basescu notes, however, that this may not be possible since the Tariceanu government is now a minority government, adding that continuation of a minority government would merely perpetuate the current ambiguous relationship between the ruling parties and the opposition, one of the root causes of the current disorder. Basescu adds that a better solution would be the formation of a new coalition willing to explicitly assume the responsibility for forming a new government based on a program agreed to by its constituent parties.

¶4. (SBU) Basescu concludes his open letter by remarking that if no stable parliamentary majority emerges, then the only remaining course is the holding of early elections, which he describes as the "mandatory democratic solution for the whole political class." Basescu concludes that anything less than a "transparent" political solution will be construed as an attempt to strip the Romanian people of their liberty to express their electoral preferences.

15. (C) Comment: President Basescu is signaling that he is ready to contemplate a new governing coalition that includes the opposition Social Democrats and excludes his own Democratic Party -- in effect burying once and for all the Democratic Alliance coalition that came to power in 2004. Although Basescu has repeatedly pushed for early elections to strengthen his hand, in alliance with the Liberals, this is perhaps the first instance in which he has publicly declared that the PNL-PD alliance is no longer viable and able to serve as the engine of government. At the same time, he laid down a marker that he would oppose any "non-transparent" political solutions, such as a minority Liberal government propped up informally by the Social Democrats and other opposition parties. Basescu and PD President Boc have emphasized in recent days that the Prime Minister and his Liberal entourage should not be able to have their cake and eat it too; if they ally with the Social Democrats, they should do so explicitly, and pay whatever political price that entails. It is a populist card for the President to play if and when he next faces the Romanian voters. End Comment.

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